

Commission News

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USDA NRCS Chief Matthew Lohr visits Delta

STONEVILLE, MS — Matthew Lohr, the 16th Chief of USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service, or NRCS, was the keynote speaker at the Delta F.A.R.M. Annual Meeting on June 11, 2019, in Stoneville.

Chief Lohr's visit was an extra special occasion, as this is only the third time a Chief of the NRCS has visited the Delta in the last 20 years.

The implementation of the new farm bill and changes to the Conservation Stewardship Program, or CSP, and other conservation farm programs were topics discussed by Chief Lohr at the meeting.

C.D. Simmons III, the Delta F.A.R.M. Chairman, welcomed Delta F.A.R.M. members, sponsors, partners, friends and colleagues to the meeting.

Trey Cooke of the Delta F.A.R.M. staff, delivered the Activity Report.

NRCS State Conservationist Kurt Readus introduced Chief Lohr.

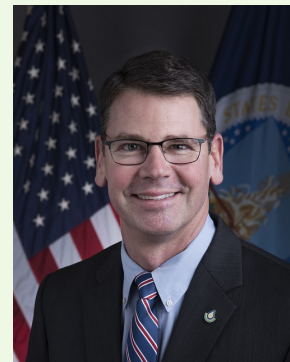
Delta F.A.R.M. hosted a luncheon following the meeting.

Chief Lohr was raised on a century family farm in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley. A fifth generation farmer, Lohr has spent his life working for the betterment of

agriculture and stewardship on working lands.

Since 2017, he has farmed full time on his family's operation, which includes poultry, beef cattle, row crops and sweet corn.

He and his wife, Beth, have six children.



MATTHEW LOHR, CHIEF

Gilbert attends NASCA mid-year meeting in Wyoming



IN FOREGROUND: Noah Marshall, Mark and Alice Gilbert's grandson, takes in the view at the National Elk Refuge near Jackson Hole, WY. Mark Gilbert is at Noah's right.

AT RIGHT: May 2019 NASCA meeting attendees and guests pose in front of the Rocky Mountains. Pictured in the second row, left to right, is Alice Gilbert with grandson Noah, and MSWCC Executive Director and NASCA Board President Mark Gilbert.





2019 Youth Campers pose for a photo at Hinds CC Bull Test Station in Raymond. PHOTO BY KATHY DOUGAN

34th MSWCC Conservation Youth Camp a fun-filled success

BY KATHY DOUGAN, MSWCC

RAYMOND, MS — Thirty-two high school students from throughout the state participated in the 2019 Mississippi Soil and Water Conservation Youth Camp, held from June 9-13 at Hinds Community College in Raymond.

At the Youth Camp Awards Luncheon on Thursday, June 13, Holmes County Youth Camper Davian D. Powell was presented with a \$3,000 Mississippi Association of Conservation

Districts Endowment Fund Scholarship by MACD Board President Jerry Smith and MACD Board First Vice President Anita Cowan. All campers received Certificates of Participation.

During camp, attendees spent time at the MS Museum of Natural Science and the MS Agriculture & Forestry Museum, visited Ross Cattle

Farm in Raymond, toured Hinds Veterinary Tech School and a Pecan Nursery; watched a sawmill in operation at Copiah Lumber Company; and learned about genetics at Hinds CC Bull Test Station, polled Herefords at Penn's Farm, soils at Boyd Soils Farm and tree seedlings at Weyerhaeuser Nursery.

Jamie Holt of MDWFP did a presentation on black bears; and the campers learned about aquatic ecology from Deb Veeder of Adopt-A-Stream and Barry Pessoney

of NRCS, forestry from Jim Barnes of NRCS, and reptiles from Corey Wright, wildlife biologist and conservation educator at the MS Museum of Natural Science.

Penn's Farm, Weyerhaeuser Nursery, Copiah County SWCD and Mississippi Cattlemen's Association provided lunch during camp, and Jefferson

Davis County SWCD hosted the campers for an afternoon of fishing, swimming, tubing and dinner. On Wednesday, after traveling to various sites including McClain's Safari Park, the campers went to Bass Pro Shop in Pearl, then headed to Trustmark Park for dinner and a Mississippi Braves baseball game.

Camp concluded Thursday with a presentation on Energy Conservation by Mindy Stevens, HCC sustainability projects coordinator, in the morning, and an awards luncheon at 11:30 AM, at which Johnny Williams, Director of Sons of the King nonprofit organization, was the keynote speaker.

Matt Wilson of Tallahatchie County was voted camp spokesperson and addressed campers and guests at the luncheon.

Thank you to our sponsors: Mississippi Association of Conservation Districts, Inc., USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Copiah County Soil and Water Conservation District, Jefferson Davis County Soil and Water Conservation District, and the Mississippi Cattlemen's Association.



MACD President Jerry Smith presents Mississippi Association of Conservation Districts Youth Camp \$3,000 Endowment Fund Scholarship to Davian D. Powell of Holmes County.

MCDEA Summer Conference set for June 26-27

STARKVILLE — This year's MCDEA Conference will be held June 26-27, 2019, at the Hilton Garden Inn in Starkville.

Late registration is \$145 and includes lunch and dinner on June 26 and lunch on June 27.

If you have questions, please call MCDEA President Meleiah Tyus at 662-912-4152 or Mark Gilbert at 601-354-7645.



Ricky Johnson retires

State Conservationist Kurt Readus, left, presents NRCS Soil Conservation Technician Ricky Johnson of Prentiss County with an award in honor of his retirement after 28 years with NRCS.



Greasy Creek Watershed Pipe Inspection

At left, Natural Resource Specialist Lance Middleton carries the motorized watershed camera down to the outlet pipe at Greasy Creek in Lafayette County (yellow arrow indicates pipe). In the center the camera is shown heading into the pipe. At right, MSWCC Deputy Administrator Brad Shedd operates the remote that controls the camera as he views the camera's movement on a monitor screen. The camera head spins 180 degrees to allow inspection of the pipe joints. PHOTOS BY JOHN WILLIAMS, MSWCC

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR UPCOMING MEETINGS

MCDEA SUMMER CONFERENCE:

June 26-27, 2019, Hilton Garden Inn, Starkville, MS

NACD SOUTHEAST REGION MEETING:

Aug. 11-13, 2019, Park Vista Hotel, Gatlinburg, TN

DELTA AREA SUMMER MEETING:

July 9, 2019, Ground Zero Blues Club, Clarksdale, MS

MACD ANNUAL MEETING:

Jan. 22-23, 2020, Jackson-Hilton, Jackson, MS

NACD 2019 SUMMER CONSERVATION FORUM AND TOUR:

Aug. 2-7, 2019, Drury Plaza Hotel, Santa Fe, NM

NACD 74th ANNUAL MEETING:

Feb. 8-12, 2020, Las Vegas. For more information, please visit *NACD's Annual Meeting* webpage.

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Lafayette County hosts North Area Summer Meeting in Oxford

OXFORD — Lafayette County hosted the 2019 North Area Summer Meeting on May 30, 2019, at the MS Cooperative Extension Service Building in Oxford.

An area MACD business meeting was conducted, with speakers and commentators including: Mark Gilbert, Executive Director, MSWCC; Kurt Readus, State Conservationist, NRCS; Andy Gipson, Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce; Don Un-

derwood; and Edith Kent, winner of a MACD Endowment Fund Scholarship in 2017. Awards were presented, followed by a luncheon.

Award winners not present were: Aaron Henderson, winner of the North Area Livestock Environmental Stewardship Award; First Place Poster Contest Winners: Nicole McFadden, Special Education; and Sean Mims, Grades K-1.



Louise McKellar, at left, accepts the North Area Commissioner of the Year award from MACD First Vice President Anita Cowan.



Delta Datsis, at left, accepts the North Area Employee of the Year award from Anita Cowan.



Audra Kirkland, at left, accepts award for winning the 7-8 grade Essay Contest from Anita Cowan.



Sledge Taylor, at left, accepts the Outstanding Cropland Conservationist award from Anita Cowan.



Russell Jolly, at left, accepts the Outstanding Wildlife Conservationist award from Anita Cowan.



Ricky Johnson, at left, accepts the North Area NRCS Soil Conservation Technician Award from Anita Cowan.



Jacee Marich, at left, accepts award for winning the 2-3 grade Poster Contest from Anita Cowan.

PHOTOS BY
CARLEE GOODE,
MSWCC



Payne Graves, at right, accepts award for winning the 9-10 grade Essay Contest from Anita Cowan.



Kirsten Cooper, at left, accepts award for winning the 11-12 grade Essay Contest from Anita Cowan.



Sarah Grantham, at right, accepts award for winning the 4-6 grade Poster Contest from Anita Cowan.



Caleb Roberson, at left, accepts award for winning the 7-8 grade Poster Contest from Anita Cowan.



Cadyn Collins, at right, accepts award for winning the 9-10 grade Poster Contest from Anita Cowan.



Left to right: Christy Robinson, Carol Watt, John Hopson and Lee Patterson from Lafayette County receive the Earth Team Field office award.



AT LEFT: Left to right: Christy Robinson, Pam Selby and Meleiah Tyus accept the Earth Team Group Award.



AT RIGHT: Christy Robinson presents the Earth Team Volunteer Individual Award to Steve Holman.

Central Area Summer Meeting takes place in Starkville

STARKVILLE — Oktibbeha County hosted the 2019 Central Area Summer Meeting on June 6, 2019, at the Mississippi State University Campus clubhouse at the football stadium.

An area MACD business meeting was conducted, with speakers and commentators including: Attala Commissioner Jack Holmes; Oktibbeha Commissioners LeAnne Peters; Central Area Vice President Monte Ladner; and Dr. Steve Martin of MSU Extension Service. Don Underwood conducted Commissioner Training.

Partnership reports were delivered by MSWCC Executive Di-

rector Mark Gilbert; State Conservationist Kurt Readus, and MACD President Jerry Smith.

Awards were presented, followed by a luncheon.

Those receiving awards that were not present at the meeting include:

Bruce Hearn, Central Area NRCS Employee of the Year;

Poster Contest Winners Grades K-1 Morgan Al-man; and Grades 2-3 Winner Elan Kirk;

Essay Contest Winners: Grades 7-8 Central Area First Place GraceLea Bozeman; Grades 9-10 Central Area First Place Winner Vanessa Ugalde; and Grades 11-12 Central Area First Place Winner Todd Larkin.



Madison County District Coordinator Celia Miller accepts the Central Area District Employee of the Year Award from MACD President Jerry Smith.



K & G Farms owners (left to right) Kirby and Gina Nazary of Leake County, accept the Central Area Livestock Environmental Stewardship Award from Jerry Smith.



Jerry Smith, at right, presents the Central Area Outstanding Wildlife Conservationist Award to Carlton and Johnnie Brock of Leake County.



Jerry Smith, at right, presents Krislynn Vowell with the Central Area Poster Contest First Place Award for Grades 4-6.



Miracle Weston accepts the award for winning the Central Area Poster Contest for Grades 10-12 from Jerry Smith.



Jerry Smith, at right, presents Janay Braggs a First Place Award for winning the Grades 7-9 Poster Contest.



Shamiyah Doss won First Place in the Poster Contest in the Special Education category.

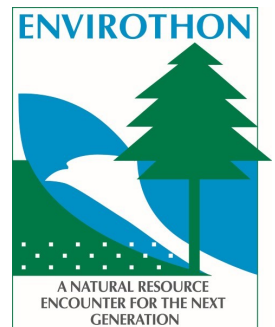


Delores Pell from Raleigh accepts the NRCS Individual Earth Team Volunteer Award from Jerry Smith



From left, Malcolm Lowe, NRCS Supervisory District Conservationist and Edith Wallace accept the NRCS Earth Team Volunteer Award for Simpson County Earth Team from Jerry Smith.

PHOTOS BY ERICA FORTENBERRY



Oxford High School Team A will compete at the National Conservation Foundation, NCF-Envirothon Competition at North Carolina State University, Raleigh, NC, from July 28 to August 2, 2019.